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Remarks

Claims 26 through 32, 37 through 49, and 51 through 53 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hartzell in view of Vaidya et. al. and any one of Witman, Ochi and Wagner, and Daurer ('413). Claims 35 and 36 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hartzell, Vaidya, any one of Witman, Ochi and Wagner and Daurer as applied to claim 26, in further view of JP 9-109308. Claims 37 through 42 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hartzell, Vaidya, any one of Witman, Ochi and Wagner and Grimnes as applied to claim 26 above and in further view of Ogata '969. The Examiner has, however, indicated that claim 33 is allowed.

In responding to these rejections, the Applicant has cancelled former independent claim 26 and replaced that claim with new claim 54. New claim 54 redirects the invention as claimed to a composite body having a particular structure for the two decorative layers. The additional layer, disposed on the carrier, is covered by a first decorative layer having interruptions or openings. A second decorative layer is then overlaid upon the first decorative layer to partially overlap the first decorative layer at edge regions thereof proximate the discontinuities, interruptions or openings in that first decorative layer. The second decorative layer also has discontinuities, interruptions, or openings through which portions of the first decorative layer are visible. These limitations are clearly distinguished from the prior art of record, since only Hartzell discloses decorative layers which overlap and, in the case of Hartzell, the overlapping consists only of a single seam extending across the layers.

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Neither of the Hartzell layers discloses the discontinuities, interruptions, or openings as claimed.

The discontinuities, interruptions, or openings in the first decorative layer permit the thermoplastic polymer to gain access to the second decorative layer for firmly bonding the second decorative layer in the composite body. The discontinuities, interruptions, or openings in the second decorative layer permit external viewing of the first decorative layer through "windows" in a second decorative layer. In this manner, a composite structure is achieved in which the visible pattern contours are defined by the second decorative layer. The continuities, interruptions or openings in the first decorative layer can therefore be fashioned with large tolerances and precise cutting or fashioning of the discontinuities, interruptions, or openings in the second decorative layer defines the overall optical appearance of the resulting design. Taken together, these elements result in a composite body having an esthetically pleasing appearance and good structural integrity, which can be manufactured in a straightforward and economical fashion.

With regard to the method claims, former claim 43 has been cancelled and replaced with new method claim 55 reciting the features of structural claim 54 using functional language. The dependent claims of record have been amended appropriately.

The prior art of record provides neither a suggestion for the structure now claimed nor for the advantages associated therewith. The Applicant therefore respectfully submits that this application is sufficiently distinguished from the prior art of record to satisfy the conditions of 35

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USC 103. Review, acceptance and passage to issuance are therefore respectfully requested.

No new matter has been added in this amendment.

Respectfully submitted,

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